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Review of progress in the implementation of the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia

First progress report

I. Overview

1. The present report covers the first nine months of the engagement of Liberia with the Peacebuilding Commission, from 1 November 2010 to 31 July 2011. The statement of mutual commitments between Liberia and the Commission (PBC/4/LBR/2) identified three peacebuilding priorities: strengthening the rule of law, supporting security sector reform and promoting national reconciliation. The present report outlines the progress and challenges. The reporting period witnessed increased political will for judicial reform, a major evolution in the legal framework for the security sector and progress towards a more concerted approach to national reconciliation. However, while the professional capacity of the justice and security systems are being developed, greater attention will need to be paid to ensuring that underlying these efforts is a vibrant political society to better guarantee the legitimacy of these institutions. A critical component of building such a society will be to address the historical divide in Liberian society that underlies most of the root causes of the conflict.

2. The justice system is making commendable progress. A jury bill is pending before the Legislature, which should significantly reduce the backlog of court cases and in turn lower the high pretrial detention rates. National institutions — the Judicial Institute and the Law School — are incrementally building a cadre of legal professionals to be deployed throughout the country. Plans are also being developed to ensure that prosecutors and public defenders are installed in line with the number of cases being brought to trial. At the same time, linkages among the different rule of law actors are being developed systematically.

3. The Land and Law Reform Commissions are moving forward in realizing their mandates. An alternative dispute resolution system is being piloted, potentially diverting tens of thousands of land disputes from the formal courts. The act creating the Law Reform Commission has been enacted. The Commission has developed a

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five-year strategic plan that contains proposals to remedy, among other weaknesses, the limited engagement of the public in legal reform.

4. Nonetheless, the reputation of the legal profession among the general public remains poor. This is due in large part to ineffectual or non-existent oversight and accountability mechanisms for justice actors, which permits rampant corruption. Equally, there is a need to harmonize the customary and statutory legal systems in a more resolute fashion.

5. An effective and accountable security presence is gradually being established throughout the country and the long-awaited National Security Reform and Intelligence Act has been enacted. Civilian oversight is a cornerstone of this act and of the strategic plans for Liberian security institutions, but such oversight has not yet been fully translated into mechanisms that are adequate to the task. At the same time, security actors lack the basic equipment needed to carry out their jobs, and more advanced training is required.

6. The first regional justice and security hub, a core peacebuilding project that will be instrumental in enabling the Government to deliver justice and provide stability throughout the country, has become partially operational. Plans to begin the next two hubs are under way, although implementation of the software component of the project has not kept pace with construction and deployment activities. In view of the historic dual political, social and legal systems that have polarized and marginalized large segments of Liberian society, the extension of justice and the installation of security actors in more remote parts of the country should be carefully implemented to ensure that the hubs realize their potential.

7. The Liberian Government has increased the budgets for justice and security institutions. The United Nations and the World Bank are carrying out an expenditure review of those two sectors, which should provide valuable insight into how to ensure that the Government will be able to sustain its efforts in the institutions concerned.

8. There is a disparity between progress made in the areas of rule of law and security sector reform and that achieved in national reconciliation efforts. While the President has submitted her quarterly reports on follow-up to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, there has been very limited concrete activity. In consultation with national and international stakeholders, the Peacebuilding Commission sought and obtained the President's agreement . prepare a national strategy on reconciliation. The strategy should establish a coherent approach to reconciliation activities that has been missing. It will, nonetheless, be a daunting challenge that requires political space in order to continue to evolve. Human rights considerations, in particular those related to gender, will also need to be properly incorporated into the strategy.

9. At the regional level, Liberia is benefiting from a growing subregional security regime under the aegis of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Government of Liberia has signed a memorandum of understanding on the West Africa Coast Initiative aimed at combating organized crime and drug trafficking and the Transnational Crime Unit was launched in July. The Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission has joined efforts with other configurations in West Africa, in coordination with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Department of Political Affairs, the Department

of Peacekeeping Operations and Interpol, to identify means of supporting ECOWAS in combating transnational crime.

10. For its part, the Peacebuilding Commission has supported the effort aimed at translating the statement of mutual commitments into the Liberia peacebuilding programme, which contains a series of projects to support the Government in achieving its commitments. The preparation of the programme was exemplary in enhancing coordination and coherence, being inclusive and participatory and building linkages between the field and the Peacebuilding Commission. Alongside jointly led Government and United Nations coordination structures, donors have established the Justice and Security Donor Coordination Group to address a gap in information exchange. The Peacebuilding Commission took an active part in the finalization of the programme, sharing written comments and participating in key meetings in Monrovia by videoconference.

11. In its advisory capacity, the Commission has drawn on a wealth of expertise to articulate independent recommendations on peacebuilding challenges in Liberia. It has shared its analysis with interlocutors in Liberia as well as with members of the Security Council.

12. In terms of resource mobilization and awareness-raising, the Commission has solidly positioned itself. In consultation with the Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office has allocated an initial financial contribution of $20.4 million from the Peacebuilding Fund. As part of its resource mobilization efforts, the Commission will highlight the success of projects supported by the Peacebuilding Fund to persuade donors to invest in unfunded peacebuilding projects. To facilitate a targeted approach by the Commission, a resource mobilization strategy and workplan are currently being finalized. A growing network of non-governmental actors interested in Liberia and/or peacebuilding is also being kept abreast of Commission activities in Liberia.

13. The commitments agreed upon in the statement of mutual commitments remain valid.

14. A summary of proposed changes to the Government's commitments under each peacebuilding priority follows:

(a) Strengthening the rule of law:

(i) Divide the second commitment into two, in view of their relatively distinct purposes. The commitment currently reads as follows: "Increase budgetary allocations for the justice sector and take immediate steps to reduce the unacceptable levels of pretrial detention cases."

Proposals

- Increase budgetary allocations for the justice sector.
- Take immediate steps to reduce pretrial detention cases.

(ii) Amend the fourth commitment to articulate more clearly the need for dialogue between the State and society. The commitment currently reads as follows: "Engage in public outreach informing citizens of their rights and responsibilities in the legal system as well as its functioning."

(b) *Proposal*: create space for public dialogue on rule of law issues. Security sector reform:

(i) Amend the first commitment to reflect the passage of the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act. The commitment currently reads as follows: "Maintain the political will to pass and implement the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act."

Proposal: maintain the political will to implement the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act.

(ii) Amend the third commitment to reflect the progress made on the justice and security regional hub project. The commitment currently reads as follows: "Support the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the five regional hubs, initiating work on the first hub by the end of 2011."

Proposal: support the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the five regional hubs.

15. Of the Peacebuilding Commission commitments, only two are proposed for amendment, as follows:

(a) Amend the fourth commitment to delete the reference to the Makona River Initiative, which has not emerged as a key actor. The commitment currently reads as follows: "Work with regional actors, particularly ECOWAS and the Makona River Initiative, to build upon their interventions in building durable peace in Liberia."

Proposal: work with regional actors, particularly ECOWAS, to build upon their interventions in building durable peace in Liberia.

(b) Amend the seventh commitment to more clearly articulate the need for coherence among donors. The commitment currently reads as follows: "Contribute, individually and collectively, to supporting Liberia in its peacebuilding efforts by: collaborating closely with UNMIL [the United Nations Mission in Liberia] and the United Nations country team on its peacebuilding activities; encouraging the effective coordination of United Nations and other actors with respect to the implementation of national strategies; and reaching out to relevant stakeholders at Headquarters."

Proposal: contribute, individually and collectively, to supporting coherence in peacebuilding efforts in Liberia by: collaborating closely with UNMIL and the United Nations country team on its peacebuilding activities; encouraging the effective coordination of the United Nations, international organizations and donors at the country level, as well as at Headquarters or in national capitals.

16. These changes, along with a number of new benchmarks, are summarized in the statement of mutual commitments: record of progress, which is available on the Peacebuilding Commission web page.[1]

II. Introduction

17. As agreed in the statement of mutual commitments signed on 15 November 2010 by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Government of Liberia, a review

[1] http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/.

was to be completed in nine months. The present report summarizes the progress made since the adoption of the statement on the three peacebuilding priorities: rule of law, security sector reform and national reconciliation.

18. Drawing on the Government's progress report, Peacebuilding Commission mission reports and relevant studies, the paper analyses achievements in the three priority areas in relation to the overall efforts in peace consolidation and in preparation for the transition of UNMIL. The coordination, programming, advisory, awareness-raising and resource mobilization activities of the Commission are then reviewed. At the end of each section, recommendations for revisions of commitments and deliverable targets are provided for the next year under review.

III. Commitments by the Government of Liberia

A. Strengthening the rule of law

19. A well-crafted approach to strengthening the rule of law has evolved in Liberia,[2] comprising measures to expedite the processing of cases, advance legal training, harmonize traditional and statutory systems, increase access and address conflict drivers. Efforts in this sector have also been linked with those in the security sector, namely through the regional justice and security hubs. With the backing of the President and technical and financial support from the international community, key rule of law actors, from Government and civil society, are steadily advancing these reforms. Nonetheless, because of the scale of the tasks, implementation of this approach is at various stages and some fundamental deficiencies have not yet been fully resolved. Key among those deficiencies are:

(a) An outdated legal system that creates a backlog of cases on the dockets that in turn leads to prisons overcrowded with pretrial detainees;

(b) A limited number of qualified justice officials;

(c) Limited public access to courts;

(d) Incipient linkages among rule of law actors;

(e) Weak accountability and oversight mechanisms, which permits corruption;

(f) Differing views on what the Liberian justice system should be.

20. Substantive judicial reform, while overdue, has been initiated. An essential piece of legislation was prepared and submitted to the Legislature during the reporting period. If it is enacted, the current backlog of cases should decrease as more cases are adjudicated by the court of first instance and fewer are heard by a jury. An array of government officials and actors from the Liberian legal professions have assisted in drafting the bill, which draws on the magistrate mobile court project piloted by the Ministry of Justice and the judiciary. This pilot has expedited the processing of pretrial cases, thus decreasing the number of pretrial detainees. In the Liberia peacebuilding programme, it is proposed that a conference be held to further

[2] The approach in Liberia conforms to the findings of the World Bank on transforming justice institutions. See World Bank, *World Development Report: Conflict, Security and Development* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

examine judicial reform needs. In conjunction with those efforts, the Ministry of Justice is piloting an innovative probation project that could also greatly assist in decreasing prison caseloads. At the heart of this work is the pretrial detention task force and its subcommittees, which, as illustrated by the examples above, are diligently identifying practical solutions.

21. The successful implementation of the bill requires improvement in the qualifications of justice officials. In the past few years, the Judicial Institute and the Law School have developed the capacity to prepare justice officials. The first class of 61 magistrate judges graduated in the past year and is in the process of being deployed across Liberia. However, extensive training is required, particularly for magistrate judges, and it will take a couple of years to train the number of justice officials needed for all 15 counties.

22. Complementary to those efforts is the work of the Land Commission. Its alternative dispute resolution system pilot for land disputes is potentially diverting tens of thousands of cases away from the formal court system, thereby precluding it from becoming blocked by land disputes. As land disputes are a main source of conflict,[3] their resolution can also greatly assist in defusing a conflict trigger. The alternative dispute resolution system is a harmonized approach that draws on both traditional and statutory systems. The approach was commendably devised through extensive consultations undertaken with communities, including traditional leaders. The Land Commission has further advanced considerably in terms of revamping the legal code relating to public land. A public land bill should be submitted to the Legislature in the first part of 2012. This bill should also prevent a deluge of cases from being processed through the courts. Alongside those efforts, the Government is moving ahead with a compensation scheme. The Peacebuilding Commission alerted the Government to the drawbacks of the scheme and advised it to proceed cautiously in order to avoid creating expectations that could not be met.

23. Stronger linkages between the police and prosecutors are leading to improved preparation of cases for prosecution. Central to this improvement has been the Police Prosecution Coordination Subcommittee, which is identifying solutions to weaknesses in the system. Steps are also being taken to appoint court liaison officers throughout the country to assist coordination between prosecutors and the courts. Along with supporting the extension of justice and security services throughout the country, the hubs have been designed to foster linkages between the police and justice officials. As discussed in the section on security sector reform, the hubs are still in the early phase of being established and it is too soon to assess their impact.

24. The next critical challenge will be deploying prosecutors and public defenders to keep pace with the number of cases being brought to trial. A deployment strategy will be finalized by the end of 2011, providing a more accurate estimate of how to proceed. In the Liberia peacebuilding programme, funding is allocated to support this deployment, with the Government absorbing the costs in 2013. From 2010/11 budget allocations, the Government has increased the budget for the justice sector for 2011/12: the budget of the Ministry of Justice has been increased by 8 per cent

[3] In its final report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission identified historical disputes over land acquisition, distribution and accessibility as a root cause of the conflict. The nationwide consultations in 2010 found that land and property disputes were one of five common sources of conflict. See Joint Programme Unit for United Nations/Interpeace Initiatives, *Peace in Liberia: Challenges to Consolidation of Peace in the Eyes of the Communities* (September 2010).

(excluding allocations for the Liberia National Police, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and the National Bureau of Investigation, covered in the following section) and that of the judiciary by 4 per cent.[4] The United Nations and the World Bank are carrying out a justice and security public expenditure review that will provide valuable analysis on how to guarantee the sustainability of justice and security projects in the Liberia peacebuilding programme.

25. Alongside the tangible political will of the Government is the buy-in of the Liberian legal profession, as demonstrated by their engagement in reform efforts. The Law Reform Commission is a key actor. The passage of the Act establishing the Commission, two years after its creation by an executive order, along with the allocation of close to $1 million, reveals a growing recognition by the Government of the important role the Commission can play in reviewing the legal landscape in Liberia. The World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2011[5] strikingly illustrates the important role of the Law Reform Commission. On the index factor "open Government", Liberia scored 0.14 out of 1.0, giving it the lowest ranking globally, regionally and among countries in the same income group. Liberia's rank reflects the non-publication of laws, limited opportunities for the public to participate in legal reform, restricted access to draft laws and opaque laws. Building upon the reactivation of law reporting, the Law Reform Commission recently launched its strategic plan for 2011 to 2016. The plan contains proposals which would remedy these open government issues.

26. The plan is also strong in recognizing the general public as a major stakeholder in legal reform, which is emphasized in the statement of mutual commitments.[6] In the area of awareness-raising, the efforts of the Law Reform Commission will be complementary to various ongoing projects, among which the project on strengthening the rule of law has been exemplary in the partnership established between the Ministry of Justice, traditional leaders, national non-governmental organizations, communities and the international community. The project, first implemented with money from the Peacebuilding Fund in 2008, has evolved into a core component of the Liberia peacebuilding programme and is setting standards for awareness-raising work in communities, as well as linking policy discussions on paralegal assistance with the reality in rural communities.

27. However, while current and planned efforts to educate the public as to their rights and responsibilities will enable citizens to constructively contribute to and better assess the workings of the justice system, if persistent concerns over corruption are not more resolutely tackled, the legitimacy of the justice system will continue to be undermined. Liberia also ranked poorly on the World Justice Programme index factor "absence of corruption" with a score of 0.27 out of 1.0, placing it sixty-second out of 66 States at the global level, seventh out of 9 States in the region and sixth out of 8 States in its income group. Critical in countering corruption in the justice system is effective implementation of oversight mechanisms and a case management system, which features prominently in both the statement of mutual commitments and the Liberia peacebuilding programme. A standardized record-keeping system has been established but not yet implemented.

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[4] The fiscal year in Liberia is from July to June.

[5] Accessed 24 October 2011 at http://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/wjproli2011_0.pdf.

[6] As stated in the statement of mutual commitments, "Central to improving the rule of law is an informed and engaged public" (PBC/4/LBR/2, para. 14).

Consultations are foreseen to review the mandate and parameters for an independent civilian oversight body, the mandate for which is currently being prepared.

28. Notwithstanding the importance of all the reforms mentioned above, as plainly set out in a United States Institute of Peace study, even if the formal court system were functioning free of corruption, exactly according to its explicit precepts and making more timely resolutions, and was more accessible to average Liberians, it still would not be capable of delivering the justice that would satisfy most rural Liberians.[7] This relates to a fundamental difference between Liberians as to the meaning of justice and is at the core of the dual political, social and legal systems in Liberia that are one of the root causes of the conflict. Most rural Liberians see justice from a perspective of group interests and social relations, which is in line with customary practices, rather than from an individual rights angle as is codified in the Liberian statutory system. A conference was held in 2010 on the topic and a series of recommendations were made, on which there has been only limited follow-up.

Priority recommendations for the next year

29. The World Development Report 2011 underscores justice as a key State responsibility that is needed to break a cycle of violence. The report further emphasizes the need for State institutions to be legitimate, suggesting that the most important forms of legitimacy are political — "the use of credible political processes to make decisions that reflect shared values and preferences" — and performance legitimacy — "earned by the effective discharge by the state of its agreed duties".[8] The importance of the political component of legitimacy is further discussed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in its 2011 guidelines, in which it is stated that statebuilding needs to be understood in the context of state-society relations; the evolution of a state's relationship with society is at the heart of statebuilding.[9]

30. In terms of performance, Liberia's justice system is making commendable progress and addressing two root causes of the conflict: a historically weak justice system and land disputes. In terms of competence, the justice system in Liberia should be assessed as legitimate within a few years if current efforts remain on track and corruption is resolutely tackled. The judiciary, with strong support from the Liberian Bar Association, needs to move swiftly and with steadfast resolve to implement current plans related to oversight and case management. New deliverable targets are proposed to this effect.

31. However, as noted by the United States Institute for Peace and emerging also from the World Justice Project scores, the political legitimacy of the system may not be realized if systematic means are not established to permit continuous public dialogue on matters of justice, in particular on a common definition for justice. This will be fundamental to harmonizing the dual justice systems in Liberia. While

[7] Deborah H. Isser, Stephen C. Lubkemann and Saah N'Tow, *Looking for Justice: Liberian Experiences with and Perceptions of Local Justice Options* (Washington, D.C., United States Institute for Peace, 2009).

[8] The World Bank, *World Development Report: Conflict, Security and Development* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

[9] OECD, *Supporting Statebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Policy Guidance*, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series (OECD Publishing, Paris, 2011).

commitment 4 under the rule of law concerns public outreach, it is suggested that the commitment be amended to specify dialogue between State and society.

32. For the purpose of clarity, it would be further advisable to separate the second commitment on budgetary matters and decreases in pretrial detention rates into two separate commitments. The suggestions above are reflected in table 1, along with proposals for some new deliverable targets, while others which are still unmet remain the same.

Table 1
Proposed revision of targets for strengthening the rule of law, to be implemented by August 2012

Government commitments	*Proposed targets*
1. Prioritize the political will to facilitate the work of the Land Commission and the Law Reform Commission	Land Commission: • Assessment undertaken of the alternative dispute system piloted in 2011 • Public land bill enacted Law Reform Commission: • National law reform strategy adopted • Law Reform Commission realizes the results/outputs included in the strategy for 2011/12 • A national conference on judicial reform takes place
2. Increase budgetary allocations for the justice sector	• Budgetary increases in line with the recommendations of the United Nations and World Bank justice and security expenditure review • Results of the review are publicized
3. Take immediate steps to reduce pretrial detention cases	• Decrease in pretrial detention statistics • Jury bill enacted • Number of justice officials trained • Number of cases out on probation
4. Strengthen human resources management to ensure deployment of judicial staff keeps pace with deployment of the Liberia National Police	• Newly graduated magistrate judges deployed • Number of county attorneys and prosecutors deployed • Assignment of judges reflective of the number of cases on the docket • Establishment of legal services based at the hub

Government commitments	*Proposed targets*
5. Create space for public dialogue on rule of law issues	• Follow-up on the recommendations of the 2010 national conference on harmonizing the traditional and statutory legal systems • Dialogue on traditional and statutory views of justice initiated (These are complementary to those proposed under the Law Reform Commission under the first commitment)
6. Create and implement a case management and tracking system	• Establishment of record-keeping and case management pilot in Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties • Extension of record-keeping and case management pilot to Grand Gedeh, Sinoe, Grand Kru, River Gee and Maryland Counties
7. Establish effective oversight mechanisms for the justice system which provide guarantees for judicial independence and public accountability	• Public service office at the hub(s) established • Independent civilian oversight body for justice officials established following consultations with the general public on its mandate • Review of court fees and fine provisions and practices is completed • Review of bail scheme completed • Judicial Legislative Committee meetings held • Policy on a Liberian paralegal programme prepared by task force on non-lawyers

B. Security sector reform

33. Steady progress is being made to establish an effective and accountable security presence throughout the country. In the past eight years, Liberia's security architecture has evolved from a multi-agency architecture rife with duplications to that of a streamlined sector with clearly defined parameters of function and responsibility. Police and soldiers have been vetted and have undergone training. The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, if belatedly, is now being reformed at a commendable pace. However, without greater attention to civilian oversight, further training, effective community outreach, adequate funding, reduction in rates of corruption and adequate working tools, current plans could be thwarted.

34. The legal framework for the security sector is almost complete. The Legislature has passed the long-awaited National Security Reform and Intelligence Act rationalizing the security sector in Liberia. In follow-up, it is now necessary to draft a

police act and initiate reform of the Drug Enforcement Agency. Other outstanding documents are the National Defence Strategy and the Firearms Control Act.

35. Civilian oversight of the security sector has been established as a cornerstone within the legal framework and also in key strategic plans of the country, including Liberia's poverty reduction strategy. However, these have not been fully translated into mechanisms that are adequate to the task. Consequently, an effective check has not been established to prevent the executive branch from manipulating the security forces for political purposes, as has happened repeatedly in the past and was a root cause of the conflict.[10] Four actors are essential to this task: the National Security Council, civil society, the Ministry of Defence and the Legislature. The National Security Reform and Intelligence Act clarified the roles and responsibilities of the National Security Council as well as those of the National Security Adviser and affiliated county and district Security Councils. Efforts are now needed to operationalize these structures. The Ministry of Defence needs to finalize its strategy and continue to develop internal administrative competencies, which remain at basic levels. These competencies are vital to enabling the Ministry to manage the army. UNMIL is carrying out an assessment of the Defence Committees of both houses of the Legislature. This assessment should determine how to begin supporting these committees, which have been neglected in recovery efforts and consequently have severe capacity weaknesses in expertise and tools. Uniquely, civil society is well organized and contributes through monitoring of the sector and providing substantive advice. The uneven capacity of these four core actors results from an uncoordinated approach to the larger reform of the security sector.

36. Assistance to the Liberia National Police, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation and justice actors is being aligned with the establishment of the hubs. The first hub, in Gbarnga, is progressing and construction of buildings at the administrative centre is under way. Deployment and command and control plans are in place for security actors and, as outlined in the preceding section, this is being synchronized with efforts to increase the presence of justice officials. The first hub became operational in October 2011 to a limited degree, with the partial deployment of the police. The hub is expected to be fully operational with all construction completed and all staff deployed by March 2012. Plans to begin the next two hubs are under way and all five hubs are scheduled to be operational by 2013.

37. However, implementation of the software components — training, case management, logistics and community outreach — has been impeded. This is particularly disconcerting as it concerns community outreach. As documented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, historic dual political, social and legal systems have polarized and marginalized large segments of Liberian society. Liberians have persistently raised concerns about the capacity and professionalism of security and justice actors.[11] Yale University and Innovations for Poverty Action,

[10] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in its final report identified an "entrenched political and social system founded on privilege, patronage, politicization of the military and endemic corruption, which created limited access to education and justice, economic and social opportunities and amenities" as one of the root causes of the Liberian conflict.

[11] See, for instance, Deborah H. Isser, Stephen C. Lubkemann and Saah N'Tow, *Looking for Justice: Liberian Experiences with and Perceptions of Local Justice Options* (Washington, D.C., United States Institute for Peace, 2009); the World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index, Washington, D.C., 2011, available from www.worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/wjproli2011_0.pdf; and Joint Programme Unit for United Nations/Interpeace Initiatives, *Peace in Liberia: Challenges to Consolidation of Peace in the Eyes of the Communities* (September 2010).

citing research carried out recently, concluded that there is a real risk that the hubs will be ineffective or even counterproductive in improving perceptions of the police and curbing the prevalence of crime.[12]

38. In large part, citizens' perceptions are accurately based on the lack of tools at the disposal of security actors, namely the Liberia National Police. An inadequate number of vehicles and deficient communication equipment seriously hampers security actors from performing their functions. Police and immigration officers lack even basic supplies such as pens. Provisions to better equip security actors have been made in the Liberia peacebuilding programme. Concerns are also arising about the number of national police, which currently stands at 4,000. It may be necessary to significantly increase that number, which is being more thoroughly considered in the transition planning process. The sustainability of these efforts will nonetheless depend on the Government being able to absorb recurring costs. As with the budget for the justice sector, the security sector budget has been augmented for 2011/12 from the previous years: the budgets for the Liberia National Police and the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization increased by 9 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. The budget for the Police Training Academy was raised by 11 per cent. The expenditure review by the United Nations and the World Bank should provide valuable insights into current budgets, as well as how better to guarantee that the Government will be able to sustainably pay and equip its security forces.

39. What merits consideration is the extremely limited project money that has gone into building the police and the justice system. While mentoring and other forms of capacity-building enhance the professionalism of security providers, the lack of funds for basic equipment and rehabilitation of facilities severely constrains the system and critically limits the Government in being able to take on the security role that UNMIL is currently fulfilling.

40. At the regional level, Liberia is benefiting from a growing subregional security regime under the auspices of ECOWAS. Most notable has been the signing of the memorandum of understanding on the West African Coast Initiative between the Liberian Government and ECOWAS in June 2011. The Liberian Transnational Crime Unit was launched in July. These are critical steps in deterring transnational crime, which remains the principal external threat to stability in Liberia and the subregion. A few subregional instruments are also guiding Liberia, namely the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials in finalizing its own Firearms Control Act. Passage of the Firearms Control Act would formally establish the Liberia Small Arms Commission, which plays a vital role in overseeing Liberia's compliance with the ECOWAS Convention. The harmonization of immigration procedures has also enabled Ghana to include Liberian immigration officers in its own immigration school.

Priority recommendations for the next year

41. Along with justice, the 2011 World Development Report names security as a key responsibility that State institutions need to provide to break cycles of violence. While Liberia has made tremendous strides in reforming the security sector, it has not yet fully transformed it into a legitimate institution. Planned and ongoing efforts

[12] Robert Blair, Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman, *Patterns of Conflict and Cooperation in Liberia (Part 1): Results from a Longitudinal Study*, Yale University and Innovations for Poverty Action.

should continue to build the professionalism of security providers and new deliverable targets are proposed to this effect. In large part this will be contingent on financing for security providers. The findings of the United Nations and World Bank expenditure review will provide an opportunity to concretely assess how this may be done, including a realistic timeline within which the Government can take on the costs associated with paying and equipping the security forces, as well as those for the justice system.

42. On the political side, some strategic opportunities exist to engage the public on security reform, namely the public expenditure review, the assessment of the Defence Committees and the establishment of the hubs. Deliverable targets on public dialogue are proposed under four of the commitments: (a) implementation of the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act, (b) budget increases, (c) hubs and (d) civilian oversight.

43. Further to public dialogue, it is also proposed that the Government lead a review of current efforts to ensure that systematic gaps in civilian oversight mechanisms are filled. The Peacebuilding Commission can assist in this matter by leveraging its political weight for all concerned members of the international community to support the Government in this review. These could be pivotal in preventing the repoliticization of security providers, which is arguably crucial in the Liberian context. As recalled in the National Security Strategy, security forces became a tool for repression and impunity that accentuated the total collapse of the State apparatus.

44. In view of these achievements, it is proposed that the first and third commitments be amended to reflect the passage of the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act and the work to be undertaken on the first regional justice and security hub. New deliverable targets are also proposed for each commitment, to reflect progress made towards realizing other commitments (see table 2).

Table 2
Proposed revision of targets in the area of security sector reform, to be implemented by August 2012

Government commitments	
1. Maintain political will to implement the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act	• The National Security Council meets regularly • Functioning county security councils in Bong, Grand Kru, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, River Gee and Sinoe Counties • Representation and active participation of women at every level of security policymaking • Preparation of the police act • Initiation of reform of the Drug Enforcement Agency • Engage the public in dialogue on the contents of the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act

Government commitments	
2. Increase budgetary allocations for institutions central to security and the rule of law including the Armed Forces of Liberia, Liberia National Police, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation	• Budgetary increases in line with the recommendations of the United Nations and World Bank justice and security expenditure review • Results of the expenditure review are made public
3. Support the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the five regional hubs	• Complete processing of land deeds • Police support services are functioning in the hubs with protected means for citizens to file complaints • Rates of 70 per cent deployment of officials of the Liberia National Police, Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization to the hubs with 20 per cent female representation • Implementation of command and control plans for the Liberia National Police, Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization • Establish mechanisms by Government and civil society organizations for continuous exchange with communities on the establishment and effectiveness of the hubs • Establishment of communication networks • Amendment of legislative and regulatory framework to support decentralization of justice and security actors
4. Advance reform of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in line with its strategic plan while maintaining progress on reform of the Liberia National Police	• Training opportunities for the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization are increased
5. Advance efforts to establish effective civilian oversight mechanisms for national security institutions, in particular empowering the National Security Council, county Security Councils and relevant oversight bodies in the Legislature	• Implementation of recommendations of the UNMIL/Department of Peacekeeping Operations study • Designation of a community policing focal point in Bong, Grand Kru, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, River Gee and Sinoe Counties • Finalization of the Ministry of Defence strategic plan • Conduct a review of the overarching strategy to operationalize civilian oversight mechanisms,

Government commitments	
	ensuring a coherent approach to all four actors central to civilian oversight
6. Continued engagement in regional initiatives pursued by ECOWAS	• Continued engagement with ECOWAS and other countries in the subregion on the management of the Transnational Crime Units • Passage of the Firearms Control Act • Small Arms Commission formally established • The Transnational Crime Unit is fully staffed

C. National reconciliation

45. A disconcerting disparity exists between progress made regarding the rule of law and security sector reform and that achieved in national reconciliation efforts. This merits serious attention, as a faulty social contract that resembles the discriminatory pre-civil war contract appears to be being re-established. If this is the situation, efforts to build justice and security State institutions are based on a faulty social contract, which could call into question the legitimacy of these institutions.

46. The two preceding sections demonstrate the technical orientation of the rule of law and security sector reform interventions, which should establish professional security and justice systems. However, as set out in the preceding sections, the legitimacy of those institutions is at risk owing to the lack of a vibrant political society. This may result from the fractured nature of Liberian society, which emerged from the Interpeace national consultations in 2010. Interpeace noted that Liberians have competing ethnic and religious identities, weakly integrated under a feeling of belonging to a political community as defined by the institutions and laws of the republic.[13] Yale University and Innovations for Poverty Action also found community cohesion to be deteriorating, with social cleavages becoming more defined.[12] These ruptures mirror in many aspects the historical divide between the Liberian people, as is well illustrated by the dual systems previously discussed. This division can also be seen in other root causes identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: centralization of Government and ethnic discrimination.[14] Underlying these rifts are larger identity questions, prejudice and

[13] Joint Programme Unit for United Nations/Interpeace Initiatives, *Peace in Liberia: Challenges to Consolidation of Peace in the Eyes of the Communities* (September 2010).

[14] The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission enumerates 10 specific root causes of the Liberia Civil War, namely:

1. Poverty, Governance, its over-centralization and the oppressive dominance of the Americo-Liberian oligarchy over the indigenous peoples of Liberia rights and culture.
2. The lack of any permanent or appropriate mechanism for the settlement of disputes, the judiciary being historically weak and unreliable.
3. Duality of the Liberian political, social and legal systems which polarizes and widens the disparities between the Liberian peoples — a chasm between settler Liberia and indigenous Liberia.
4. Ethnicity and the divisive clustering of the "peoples" of Liberia.
5. Entrenched political and social system founded on privilege, patronage, politicization of the

discrimination, which relate to and reflect additional root causes: gender discrimination, weak historical narrative, loss of traditional values and family breakdown.

47. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in addition to analysing the root causes of the conflict, has made a series of remedial recommendations. The President of Liberia, in her quarterly reports on follow-up to the report of the Commission, has assigned various recommendations to different Government bodies. Aside from the release of the workplan of the Independent National Commission for Human Rights, which prioritizes follow-up on repatriations and peace hut recommendations from the Commission, no further progress has been reported in relation to the report of the Commission. While the Commission has from the outset faced major challenges that have impeded its work and damaged its credibility,[15] the International Center for Transitional Justice, in its assessment of the report and the processes leading to the final report, found that the report creates opportunities for reconciliation. In a press release, the Transitional Justice Working Group stated that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission framework with all its imperfections, limitations and weaknesses, provided the best framework in Liberia, driven by Liberians themselves for addressing past human rights violations and preventing the recurrence of future violations.

48. Reconciliation is not being pursued as aggressively as it could be, however, and frustration with the lack of progress reverberates in Liberian society. Liberians, during a 2011 survey completed by OECD, voiced concerns about an excessively technical approach to development with an emphasis on physical infrastructure and largely institutional approach to peacebuilding.[16] In 2011 the University of California at Berkeley, in a nationwide survey, found that 45 per cent of respondents lacked faith that the Government would follow up on the recommendations of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the implementation of which a majority of the respondents (62 per cent) supported.

49. The Peacebuilding Commission has been preoccupied with this issue. In the Chair's briefing to the members of the Security Council in December 2010, he cautioned that the international community may be overlooking the importance of reconciliation:

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military and endemic corruption which created limited access to education and justice, economic and social opportunities and amenities.

6. Unfair discrimination against women and denial of their rightful place in society as equal partners.

7. Historical disputes over land acquisition, distribution and accessibility.

8. Lack of clarity and understanding of Liberia's history, including its history of conflicts.

9. Identity and the crisis of identity engender disunity and undermine Liberian patriotism and sense of nationhood.

10. The gradual breakdown of the family and loss of its traditional value system.

[15] Key challenges include a problematic appointment process for commissioners; problematic internal dynamics between commissioners and also with international experts; inability to develop a workplan, staffing plans, organizational structure and budget; insufficient budget; tensions with civil society actors; weak public relations and questionable respect for due process. Two of the commissioners publicly distanced themselves from the report. More information can be found in: International Center for Transitional Justice, *Beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Transitional Justice Options in Liberia*, May 2010.

[16] OECD, *International Engagement in Fragile States: Can't we do better?* (OECD Publishing, Paris, 2011).

> Challenging, because hitherto the international community has, in all other parts of the world needing rehabilitation, traditionally just thrown cement at the problem. It rebuilds the physical infrastructure — roads, bridges, institutions — and then trains police, military personnel, administrators and the like, hoping that national reconciliation will more or less take care of itself. I believe this to be a game of dice, however. In some parts of the world, over the last 150 years, amnesia may have seemingly worked when rapid economic progress was its companion. Yet memory too is deep and long.

50. In comments on the Liberia peacebuilding programme, the Peacebuilding Commission highlighted the lack of vision for reconciliation efforts. In June 2011, the Commission, in consultation with national and international stakeholders, sought and obtained the President's agreement for a national strategy on reconciliation to be prepared. A series of recommendations was made for the strategy in the mission report of the Peacebuilding Commission of June 2011. Efforts are currently under way to develop the strategy, which should establish the coherent approach that has been missing.

51. Nevertheless, the complexity of reconciliation should not be underestimated. Political space must continue to evolve. In the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2011, Liberia's score on fundamental rights is 0.61 out of 1.0, ranking forty-first out of 66 States at the global level, fourth out of 9 States in the region and second out of 8 States in its income group. Among these fundamental rights is the freedom of assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression. On an index of government powers limited by non-governmental checks, Liberia received nearly the highest possible score. This is most likely reflective of a robust civil society in Liberia, with which the Government has developed a commendable relationship. Civil society organizations are active participants in Government-led coordination bodies, such as those associated with the Liberia peacebuilding programme and also with the preparation of the poverty reduction strategy.

52. Notably, consultations have been held with the general public on the poverty reduction strategy and even on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, consultations need to be continuous and complemented by other means. In its survey, the University of California found that while 73 per cent of respondents had heard of the Commission, only 46 per cent claimed to have some knowledge of it and 45 per cent had none. An evaluation recently completed by Innovation for Poverty Action and Yale University on the community empowerment programme in Liberia entitled "A Program to Build Peace, Human Rights and Civic Participation" signals the same. This project aimed to help community members reflect on the root causes and drivers of conflict and the roles of individuals in conflict resolution and prevention. This evaluation, recognizing that it is difficult to change entrenched attitudes and participation through information and education alone, posits that to have real effect there will be a need for fundamental change in incentives and institutions.[17]

53. Creating this political space should be at the heart of the reconciliation strategy being developed and, as indicated above, human rights considerations will

[17] Christopher Blattman, Alexandra Hartman and Robert Blair, *Can We Teach Peace and Conflict Resolution? Results from a randomized evaluation of the Community Empowerment Program (CEP) in Liberia: A Program to Build Peace, Human Rights and Civic Participation* (Innovations for Poverty Action, 2011).

also need to be properly incorporated. This is likely to be a delicate task. As indicated by previous discussions on justice, Liberian traditional values do not necessarily conform to international standards. This came to light in the Interpeace consultations, where the promotion of children's rights was sharply criticized by Liberians as breaking down Liberian family structures by encouraging children to contest the traditional authority of the community and parents.[17] Gender is another sensitive topic that needs to continue to be addressed urgently, as starkly revealed by the prevalence of sexual violence both during the war[18] and today. The resolution of these root causes will require frank exchanges around societal structures, with close attention to patriarchal orders.[19] The Independent National Commission for Human Rights and the Law Reform Commission will have key roles to play in ensuring a constructive debate on the issues that will address critical tensions hindering community cohesion. The international community should be careful as to how it engages in promoting international standards to avoid obstructing full discourse around those issues.

54. Complementary to those efforts are preparations to pilot a national youth service programme. Consultations have begun to develop the programme, the focus of which will be developing agricultural skills, with linkages to the private sector to help participants find long-term employment. The programme will build upon the National Youth Volunteer Service, which focuses on health and education.

Priority recommendations for the next year

55. While the root causes of the conflict in Liberia, in particular the historical divide in society, remain germane to consolidating peace, more concerted action by the Government is needed to effectively address the root causes. Without more focused attention, efforts to strengthen security and justice institutions will likely lead to their mirroring the fractured nature of Liberian society, with disputable legitimacy. In turn, strengthening the rule of law and security sector reform are fundamental components of reconciliation in Liberia. The interlinkages among the areas of national reconciliation, strengthening the rule of law and security sector reform require that activities in all three sectors keep pace with each other to prevent the development of State institutions based on a discriminatory social contract.

56. The Government's commitments on dialogue and the Independent National Commission for Human Rights remain pertinent and urgent. New targets are proposed in table 3 to advance national reconciliation efforts, with due regard given to human rights considerations. The youth project will also continue to be monitored as it develops further and implementation begins.

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[18] Amnesty International estimates that somewhere between 60 and 70 per cent of the population suffered some form of sexual violence during the war. See Amnesty International, "Liberia: Truth, Justice, Reparation for Liberia's victims" (2007), Amnesty International, AFR 34/001/2007. A study in 2008 that looked at combatant status and sexual violence also found startlingly high rates of exposure to sexual violence among survivors: 42.3 per cent of females and 32.6 per cent of males. See Kirsten Johnson and others, "Association of combatant status and sexual violence with health and mental health outcomes in post conflict Liberia", *Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 300, No. 6 (August 2008).

[19] Pamela Scully, Erin McCandless and Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "Gender-based violence in peacebuilding and development", *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, vol. 5, No. 3 (2010).

Table 3
Proposed revision of targets in the area of national reconciliation, to be implemented by August 2012

Government commitments	
Increase inclusive dialogue on national reconciliation, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and land issues	• Timely submission of Government reports in accordance with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act • Finalization of a strategy on national reconciliation • Implementation of the strategy on national reconciliation
Generate the political will necessary for the Independent National Commission for Human Rights to fulfil its mandate	• Implementation of Independent National Commission for Human Rights workplan
Explore the creation of a pilot national youth service initiative	• Implementation of National Youth Service Programme for Peace and Development

IV. Commitments by the Peacebuilding Commission

A. Programming and coordination

57. One of the main achievements of the recent past has been the translation of the statement of mutual commitments into the Liberia peacebuilding programme. Projects and activities have been developed that correspond to all of the Government's commitments in the statement, and the programme prioritizes and sequences these interventions over a three-year period (2011-2013). The programme and the statement of mutual commitments draw upon and are informed by the 2008-2012 poverty reduction strategy and security and justice strategic plans.[20] The work undertaken for the Liberia peacebuilding programme is being incorporated into the ongoing planning for the revision of the poverty reduction strategy and the long-term development plan entitled "Vision 2030: Liberia rising".

58. The process has been exemplary in meeting some key recommendations that have been put forth in a number of studies, including the Peacebuilding Commission review in 2010 and the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (Fragile States Principles). In addition to including a plan that is prioritized, sequenced and aligned with national strategies, the strengths of the process are:

(a) Enhanced coordination and coherence;

[20] National security strategy, Liberian National Police strategic plan, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization strategic plan, Ministry of Justice strategic plan, judiciary strategic plan, Bureau of Rehabilitation and Corrections strategic plan.

(b) Government-led with wide-ranging Government participation in both the ministerial and technical branches;

(c) National budgetary considerations factored into planning;

(d) Inclusive and participatory planning and implementing processes;

(e) Built linkages between the field and the Peacebuilding Commission.

59. While the preparation of the Liberia peacebuilding programme was arduous, the process improved coordination. A two-tiered coordination structure comprised of three core bodies was created. The first tier is the Joint Steering Committee which is accountable for allocation of the Peacebuilding Fund. Reporting to the Committee are two technical advisory groups corresponding to the two components of the programme: (a) justice and security and (b) national reconciliation. These structures allow for an inclusive approach that engages Government, donors, the United Nations, international non-governmental organizations and national civil society. The Government has led the process and brought together all government agencies concerned, including the Ministry of Finance, at both the technical and the ministerial level.

60. Complementary to these structures is the work of the Justice and Security Donor Coordination Group. Sweden, in consultation with Ireland, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, established this group in Liberia, which has addressed a gap in information exchange among key donors in these sectors. In turn, the activities of this group facilitate the work of donors, providing support in a more focused and complementary manner to the Liberian National Police, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and justice officials. However, some States providing bilateral assistance in these sectors are not yet members, thereby limiting the full leveraging of assistance to address the critical gaps identified by the Government and endorsed by the Peacebuilding Commission.

61. The Peacebuilding Commission actively participated in the finalization of the Liberia peacebuilding programme, sharing written comments. The Steering Group[21] also exchanged views with the Joint Steering Committee and the justice and security technical advisory group in videoconferences. As a result of three missions to Liberia and other meetings with key actors in Liberia, strong linkages have developed between the Peacebuilding Commission based in New York and stakeholders in Liberia.

62. Coordination with regional actors, however, has proved challenging. ECOWAS does not have an office in Liberia or in New York. A mission was planned for the Chair of the Commission, but because of conflicting agendas it was postponed to a date yet to be determined; colleagues from the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations went on behalf of the Chair, making the initial contact.

[21] The Steering Group comprises members of the Liberia configuration, who have agreed to work closely with the Chair to help ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission realizes the commitments set out in the statement of mutual commitments. Members of this open-ended group meet on an informal basis. Presently, the membership includes: China, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Liberia, Nigeria, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union.

63. With regard to the West Africa Coast Initiative, the Liberia configuration has joined efforts with other configurations in West Africa. In coordination with UNODC, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and INTERPOL, these configurations are identifying ways to support ECOWAS in combating transnational crime.

Recommendations for the next year

64. The efforts made around the preparation of the Liberia peacebuilding programme reveal the seriousness with which both the Government of Liberia and the Peacebuilding Commission have approached their respective commitments. At the same time, and as are discussed in other sections of the report, while coordination and coherence of efforts has strengthened, some gaps remain for which two recommendations are made below:

(a) Amend the Peacebuilding Commission commitment on supporting coordination to more clearly articulate the need for coherence among donors. This would be in line with the 2010 review of the Commission, which notes that the Commission must use its political weight to seek to align the various actors behind the same overarching objectives and that fragmentation, territoriality and competition among United Nations actors as well as among international organizations and donors generally are corrosive of the entire aid effort, and will critically undermine the peacebuilding effort (A/64/868-S/2010/393, paras. 58 and 59). The present wording of the commitment only specifies the United Nations;

(b) The Peacebuilding Commission should also reinforce its efforts to engage ECOWAS. Under this same commitment, the Makona River Initiative has not emerged as a key element and could be deleted.

65. In addition, the Liberia peacebuilding programme, which has become the main programme document, should replace references to the Priority Plan. The suggestions above are reflected in table 4, along with proposals for revised deliverable targets.

Table 4
Proposed revision of targets in the area of programming and coordination, to be implemented by August 2012

Peacebuilding Commission commitments	*Proposed targets*
Contribute, individually and collectively, to supporting coherence in peacebuilding efforts in Liberia by collaborating closely with UNMIL and the United Nations country team and encouraging the effective coordination of the United Nations, international organizations and donors at the country level as well as at Headquarters and in national capitals	• Participation in Liberia Integrated Mission Task Force meetings at the principals level • Engagement of interested actors (e.g., academia, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and experts) through inputs into documents, participation in meetings, etc. • Provide assessments of coordination mechanisms and coherence of efforts (e.g., in mission reports)

Peacebuilding Commission commitments	*Proposed targets*
Monitor the preparation and implementation of the Liberia peacebuilding programme seeking to advocate that the peacebuilding priorities outlined in the statement of mutual commitments are effectively addressed	• Invite the Joint Steering Committee and other partners to join the configuration or Steering Group meetings through videoconference • Visit project sites and meet with implementing partners during field trips
Work with regional actors, particularly ECOWAS, to build upon their interventions in building durable peace in Liberia and in the subregion	• Identify means for ECOWAS to contribute to the deliberations of the Peacebuilding Commission • Continue coordination efforts with the Peacebuilding Commission and configurations in West Africa, in consultation with UNODC, ECOWAS, the Departments of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations and INTERPOL

B. Advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission

66. The Peacebuilding Commission has drawn on a wealth of expertise to form independent recommendations on peacebuilding challenges in Liberia. It has shared its analysis with interlocutors in Liberia as well as with the members of the Security Council.[22]

67. To this end, three field missions and regular videoconferences have facilitated regular exchange between the Commission and national stakeholders. During three field missions, the Commission gained a range of insights from national stakeholders. Each mission included trips to outlying counties hearing from representatives of youth groups, chapters of the Women in Peacebuilding Program (WIPNET, the group that has now gained international acclaim with its former coordinator Leymah Gboyee having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize), ex-combatants, traditional leaders, local authorities, civil society organizations and prominent Liberians. Justice and security facilities have also been visited, providing the Commission with accurate views on the working conditions of government officials. Senior officials have joined Commission field trips in addition to meetings held with key officials from all three branches of the Government.

68. At the international level, the Commission has partnered with the diplomatic community, other United Nations entities, international non-governmental organizations, think tanks, academics and technical experts. An independent legal expert accompanied the mission in June 2010. The Commission has thereby gained critical insights into the Liberian conflict and was informed of operational details. While the depth to which the Commission has delved has been questioned, the

[22] The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission has briefed the members of the Security Council on three occasions: 10 December 2010, 16 March 2011 and 13 September 2011. The mission report of June 2011 was also shared with the members of the Security Council. More details can be found in the Chair's statements, which are available from http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/st_chair.shtml.

insights gleaned have enabled it to substantively engage in strategic discussions and credibly advocate for policies. Its voice has cohered with that of the international community and it has managed to advance discussions with the Government, including on some sensitive topics, such as legal practice by non-Liberians, security management, oversight mechanisms, land compensation programmes and national reconciliation.

69. In 2012, the Commission will focus on the transition of security management from UNMIL to the Government through specific projects on the ground, in particular the justice and security regional hubs. The Commission will also contribute to the preparation and implementation of the strategy on national reconciliation and the evolution of a social contract in Liberia.

Priority recommendations for the next year

70. The Peacebuilding Commission has positioned itself as a knowledgeable actor that can contribute to the consolidation of peace in Liberia through the provision of advice. The Commission will be able to put forward some valuable lessons learned from Liberia that are relevant to current debates on peacebuilding at the global level, namely, identifying at what stage a country should come onto the agenda of the Commission, challenges to coherent approaches, ways of mobilizing resources and good practice on the rule of law, security sector reform and national reconciliation, particularly as they relate to discussions on statebuilding and peacebuilding.

71. No changes are suggested to revise existing commitments. New targets are proposed in table 5.

Table 5
New targets regarding the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission, to be implemented in August 2012

Peacebuilding Commission commitments	*Proposed targets*
Advise the Government and people of Liberia on lessons learned, particularly on land tenure and rights, harmonization of traditional and statutory legal systems and reconciliation from experience gained in similar situations serving as an objective voice and wielding, as merited, political leverage to keep related processes on track	• Continue partnering with experts in the fields of national reconciliation, transitional justice, rule of law and security sector reform • Compile comparative practices on war crimes prosecution, repatriations, memorials, historical documentation and national symbols to share with the Government and people of Liberia through meetings and reports as well as different forms of public outreach, including press releases, radio interviews, etc.
Contribute to deliberations on Liberia, in particular in the Security Council, by providing advice on the three peacebuilding priorities seeking to ensure a responsible transition on security management from UNMIL to the Government of Liberia	• Share analytical mission reports with the members of the Security Council • Brief the members of the Security Council during its biannual meeting on Liberia

Peacebuilding Commission commitments	*Proposed targets*
	• Meet regularly with the Assistant Secretaries-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations
	• Provide inputs into the upcoming United Nations technical assessment mission

C. Resource mobilization and awareness-raising

72. The alignment of the Liberia peacebuilding programme with the statement of mutual commitments and the active engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission in the preparation and implementation of the programme are placing the Commission in a solid position to mobilize resources. Pending availability of programmatic details, the Chair of the Commission has reached out to the Governments of Norway and the United States as well as the European Union. In Washington, D.C., the Chair also participated in a round table with an array of non-governmental actors in advocacy, policy, education and funding in countries emerging from conflict. This initiated the establishment of a network of non-governmental actors that continues to grow as new contacts are made and currently comprises more than 75 individuals. This group is kept abreast of developments at the Commission vis-à-vis Liberia. These efforts should come to fruition in the second year of the Commission's engagement.

73. A resource mobilization strategy and a workplan are currently being finalized to facilitate a targeted approach by the Chair of the Commission and members of the Liberia configuration. The Commission will be guided in its resource mobilization efforts by national ownership, sustainability and promoting South-South cooperation. It has also shared ideas with the Peacebuilding Support Office on how to allocate Peacebuilding Fund resources in order to better facilitate the Commission's resource mobilization efforts. The justice and security regional hubs are a prime example of the allocation of Peacebuilding Fund resources to initiate a project, thereby creating opportunities for the Commission to promote expansion of a project based on initial implementation success. In total, the Peacebuilding Fund made an initial financial contribution of $20.4 million in July 2011 to support the implementation of the Liberia peacebuilding programme. Subsequently, the Joint Steering Committee has prepared and approved a costed action plan outlining how the initial Peacebuilding Fund contribution will be spent and how this funding integrates with other funding instruments available.

74. No changes are suggested to revise existing commitments. New targets are proposed in table 6.

Table 6
New targets in the areas of resource mobilization and awareness-raising

Peacebuilding Commission commitments	*Proposed targets*
Mobilize resources for the peacebuilding priorities identified in the present statement of mutual commitments and the Liberia peacebuilding programme advocating for pledges and commitments made by different donors to be honoured and effectively coordinated	• Approach, in coordination with Liberian officials and governmental and intergovernmental actors from traditional donors • Contact foundations from which funding could be sought for Liberia • Arrange follow-up with the African Development Bank focused on Liberia
Broaden the donor base for Liberia and encourage wide participation of partners in all international forums in which support can be garnered for Liberia	• Monitor the activities of multinational corporations working in Liberia in order to identify prospects for fund-raising • Approach States with multinational corporations working in Liberia • Seek in kind resources from States in the region
Generate sustained attention and undertake measures within the international community for support to the peacebuilding process by highlighting progress in, as well as challenges to and risks and opportunities for peacebuilding efforts in the country	• Speak at various events (e.g., the Council on Foreign Relations, United Nations governing bodies, round tables and universities) to advocate on behalf of Liberians

D. Review

75. It is proposed that a yearly review of the statement of mutual commitments be carried out. During the present reporting period, progress was continuously reviewed, primarily by means of mission reports. It is anticipated that this level of engagement will be replicated in the upcoming year. Two missions are foreseen: one after the inauguration of the newly elected Government and around the planned United Nations technical assessment mission, and the other at midyear before the Security Council review of the UNMIL mandate.

76. All the proposed changes are incorporated into an outcome document for adoption by the Joint Steering Committee and the Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. This outcome document will replace the statement of mutual commitments.